

CSREES Portfolio Review Expert Panel Report Summary

Portfolio 1.2 International Economic Development CY 1999 - 2003

SUMMARY

External Review Completed: July 2004

Portfolio Description

In an era of expanding global trade, increased interest in international relationships, and increased concern about terrorism, there are many challenges and opportunities for research, education and extension by CSREES and its partners. The International Economic Development (IED) portfolio focuses on the economies of other nations (both developed and developing) and the interaction between those economies and the U.S. economy. International trade is a major area of interest, as is economic development and development assistance programs. The portfolio includes two CSREES Knowledge Areas:

- KA 606 International Trade and Development Economics
- KA 622 Foreign Policy and Programs

Summary of Comments and Recommendations

In 2004 a panel comprised of independent experts from the field was convened to assess and score the current state of the International Economic Development Portfolio. A discussion of specific comments and recommendations related to each of the dimensions of the three Office of Management and Budget (OMB) research and development (R&D) criteria used (relevance, quality, and performance) is provided below.

Relevance

The number and types of projects meets expectations, but the scope in development assistance projects is very limited. It is therefore recommended that CSREES be more strategic and proactive in providing leadership for international programs. A single nation should not be receiving 85 percent of the total developmental assistance funding. Identification of contemporary and emerging issues is good and this portfolio has achieved very good integration of research, teaching, and extension and has a very good mix of work with other disciplines

Quality

Current and appropriate methodologies are used and alignment with current science is generally good.

Stakeholder needs are being met and stakeholder input is at an acceptable level. However, CSREES and land-grant universities need to do a better job of communicating stakeholder needs to individual faculty.

Performance

Most projects are completed on time and the portfolio has visibility despite few leadership resources devoted to it. CSREES is doing a good job of managing "pass-through" funds for development assistance projects, but strategic leadership for the entire program is clearly needed. There is a critical need to be able to report outputs and impacts according to the criteria

established by CSREES for meeting OMB requirements. Finally, a need to effectively communicate the impact of CSREES programs to all stakeholders via scholarly and stakeholder-oriented communication channels exists.

Portfolio Score

Portfolio 1.2 received a total score of 69 from the panel. This score places the portfolio in the category 'adequately supports CSREES objectives.'